

DAVE WILD

# Futurework

A Guidebook for  
The Future of Work

**CHAPTER SAMPLER**

Complete digital  
and print versions of  
Futurework available at  
[dave-wild.com/futurework](http://dave-wild.com/futurework)

Do you sometimes wonder what your future holds?  
Wonder no more. It is here already.

The world of work has changed profoundly. As a result the future of work arrived early. Changing the way we now need to think, lead and work in the modern workplaces of today.

In this guidebook for the future of work, futurist Dave Wild explores the resulting workplace revolution. Based on his significant experience working internationally with industry and government leaders, Futurework focuses in on the skills we need to lead with confidence and expertise.

Sharing personal insights into the game-changing thinking of inspirational visionaries and innovators who are reshaping the world around us. Detailing how to develop the eight **Futurework skills** that equip leaders and teams to sense, understand, solve and transform their future.

Divided into three parts, Futurework begins by exploring the series of revolutions that have reshaped society – leading us to the current autonomous revolution and the ecological shift ahead. Explaining how **neuroscience discoveries** now enable us to unlock greater potential within ourselves and those around us – evolving beyond fixed mindsets of the past by developing a **growth Mindleap**.

Followed by a **Strategy Map** for collaboratively and adaptively developing modern strategies to build a future ready organisation.

Concluding with a 'how-to' **Futurework Toolkit** that will change and elevate the way you think, lead and work.

With ten foundational **Mindleap habits** and an advanced series of leaps in thinking – complete with practical reflections, conversations and actions.

Equipping you to create a  
greater future of work. Today.

# Futurework

Futurist Dave Wild is an internationally renowned expert in new ways of thinking, leading and working. Living on the edge of the world in Aotearoa New Zealand, he equips leaders and teams across the globe to create a greater future for their organisations, customers and society including:

- Visioning with the digital government leaders of the United Kingdom, South Korea, Estonia and New Zealand.
- Coaching digital and innovation leadership labs across sectors including social development, environmental, finance and technology.
- Facilitating the NZ Prime Minister’s business advisory council to explore the future of work.
- Delivering futurist keynote presentations on stages and screens across the world from South Auckland to Sydney to San Francisco.

By working with a diverse range of leaders and teams across all levels, Dave has built deep expertise in the change ready skills needed to boldly lead into an inspiring future.

*Discover more at [www.dave-wild.com](http://www.dave-wild.com)*

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The Future of Work

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[www.dave-wild.com](http://www.dave-wild.com)

*Do you sometimes wonder*

*What your future holds?*

*In our search for answers*

*It's easy to miss the signals*

*Of the future all around us*

*It doesn't have to be that way*

*Just as we're making the machines*

*Smarter by writing new code*

*We can also rewrite our own habits*

*Changing the way we think*

*Shifting the way we lead*

*Creating the future of work*

*Today*

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# How to Explore This Guidebook

There is no right or wrong way to read this book. It is your own personal journey into the future – so this Futurework guidebook is designed to equip you, following whatever path you choose to take.

Depending on your aims and the time you choose to invest you might...

## 1. Read It like a Book

After all, it is a book. Able to be read from cover to cover.

This approach will give you the greatest understanding of the future of work and new capabilities to be developed. The structure of the book begins with a big picture view of the nature of work, then frames different ways of thinking and planning, before zooming into the specific detail of new ways of working.

Although completing the book may require a considerable time investment on your part, the time required to read it is far less than the time invested to write it.

Which in turn is far less than the time invested in the life lived to discover it.

Creating the opportunity to now share those insights.

One word. At. A...

Time.

## 2. Skim It like a Guide

This is a guidebook for the future of work.

So rather than read it all in sequence, you might choose to simply skim it as you would a travel guide. Pausing and reading more in depth at the relevant points of interest on your own journey into the future.

Browsing the Contents you will see the book is divided into three parts:

- *Part I: The Future of Work* – Elevates your thinking from a mindset to a Mindleap, as a strong foundation for adapting through change and uncertainty.
- *Part II: Strategy Map* – Explores a strategic framework for navigating the future of work, while developing your own strategy for the future.
- *Part III: Futurework Toolkit* – Equips you for the future of work with a set of Mindleap habits, to build your own capabilities while inspiring and leading others.

The first two parts are structured as a series of chapters, while part three is a toolkit of 36 Mindleap habits – beginning with ten foundational habits followed by a set of 26 more advanced practices for the future of work.

### 3. Consult It like a Manual

In my work as a professional futurist, I consult with organisations around the world across three primary modes of working – speaking to inspire, facilitating to shift and coaching to upskill.

This book is designed to work alongside you in a similar way. Sequencing across these modes helps guide the way you can use the book to support others in adapting for the future of work. As we explore in the first part, this is not off in the distance but is already changing the way we work today.

Change is unlikely to happen if your audience does not believe in the need for change. Understanding why change is needed does not mean people then know how to make the change. While in turn knowing in theory how something can be done, does not then mean someone knows practically what to do.

So depending on what stage of personal or organisational development you are at, from why to how to what, you might:

- Inspire transformative change, by referencing the opening chapters *1: Revolutions at Work* and *2: The Evolution of Leadership*.
- Shift momentum forward, with the leadership perspectives in *Part I: The Future of Work* alongside the organisational strategies in *Part II: Strategy Map*.
- Upskill with new capabilities, by consulting specific thinking and working habits as detailed in *Part III: Futurework Toolkit*.

### The Future Is Now

Whatever path you choose to follow, it will be the right one.

Unless you discover it is not, in which case you can simply change your pathway through this guidebook.

Welcome to Futurework.

We are already Mindleaping into the future together.

## INTRODUCTION

# You Are the Future

*This is a guidebook*

*Filled with*

*Extraordinarily*

*Ordinary*

*Ideas*

This book is designed to rearrange your thinking.

You already have all the skills and knowledge needed for the future of work. Both the potential and the capability exist within you.

It is just that in some cases we do not yet fully realise it.

So this guidebook is as much a guide to unlocking your own full potential, as it is for navigating the workplace of the future.

Which as we will discover, can be just as accurately described as the workplace of today. Because we are all operating on different timescales. So what seems futuristic in one workplace may be very everyday in another.

Consider the moment in time when our workplaces shifted on a global scale to hybrid working, with teams working from home and meeting online. Many remarked that it was nothing new.

In some ways, it was not.

From the invention of the internet back in 1969<sup>1</sup> to the development of PC video conferencing more than three decades ago,<sup>2</sup> our workplaces had long been slowly moving towards a hybrid environment. Enabling a mix of working across homes and offices. A blend of meeting in person and online.

Working together. Even when we are apart.

## Making the Leap

The future does not appear out of nowhere.

It is there all the time. Evolving from what already is. Becoming what might be. Making the unfamiliar, familiar.

Alongside this evolution, we can also choose to change. Adapting how we work. Developing new thought patterns. Shifting our habits.

What does not change is the potential within all of us.

To dream. To collaborate. To create.

Our future.

PART I

# The Future of Work

*Ka Mua, Ka Muri*

*We Walk Backwards  
into the Future*

# SENSE

## Changing Environments

*If something doesn't make sense*

*It may be a sign*

*To pay closer attention*

*To all your*

*Senses*

What does the future hold?

This is a question we have been asking ourselves since the dawn of time.

In some cases, we can now answer the question with far greater accuracy. Through the combination of machine learning and predictive modelling we are able to estimate when the next storm might hit<sup>1</sup> or how many new umbrellas a city might require.<sup>2</sup>

In other cases, despite all of humanity's scientific and technological advances, we are still unable to clearly answer critical questions. Are we certain when the storm will arrive? Do we know for sure that everyone who might purchase an umbrella will purchase an umbrella?

This gap demonstrates the leaps in thinking needed for leading into the future.

On the one hand, as the technological tools available continue to advance, leaders and their teams have to continuously upskill to be ready for the certain changes ahead. On the other hand, as much of life remains an unknown, we need to be able to confidently lead through uncertain and unpredictable times.

As a result, sensing the future ahead requires both logical and emotional intelligence.<sup>3</sup> Logically knowing that identifying the best way forward requires understanding the emotions of others as well as yourself. Emotionally realising that deciding on the best course of action requires analysing the available data, even when it does not align with our personal perspectives.

Wherever the future might lead.

## Trust Your Intuition, Sometimes

Making sense of a complex world requires making full use of all of our senses.

From listening more carefully in meetings to watching for nonverbal cues, the better attuned our senses are the more accurate our decisions can be. Our minds have an amazing ability to fill in the gaps when information is missing,<sup>4</sup> so the fewer gaps the better the picture.

On the flipside if we never made a decision without all the information, it would be impossible to operate. Do you think I will enjoy this show? You could research all the available reviews before deciding to watch – but this still would not guarantee that you will enjoy it. The only research that would be 100% accurate, would be to watch the show.

One of our most critical senses for making decisions about the future, is our sixth sense. Our intuition. Trusting our gut.

Sometimes.

With full awareness that our intuition can be fallible.

It fills in the gaps. Sometimes astoundingly reliably. Other times not so reliably.

A pioneering research study conducted by the Future Minds Lab of UNSW set out to better understand the science behind our intuition – defined as ‘the ability to make successful decisions without rational, analytical thought or inference.’<sup>5</sup> In other words, our ability to make complex decisions in a way that our rational and analytical conscious mind cannot fully comprehend.

During the study participants were asked to assess the direction of dots moving on a computer screen, while simultaneously viewing either positive or negative images (for example puppies versus snakes) using a continuous flash suppression technique, where the images do not consciously register.

The study determined that participants’ subconscious minds used the images to help decide the direction of the dots. With positive images shown when dots were moving right and negative images when dots were moving left, the brain subsequently used this repeating pattern to intuitively predict direction.

The harder the decision task proved, the more the benefit that the subjects gained from the images. Their response times also became faster and they felt more confident about their decisions – even if their judgement proved incorrect.<sup>6</sup>

This intuitive phenomenon is nothing new.

History is littered with very smart well-informed people whose intuition was famously wrong. Where the future outcome did not align with their instinctive pattern recognition based on past experiences.

The world only has a market for five computers.<sup>7</sup> Television will never be as popular as radio.<sup>8</sup> The Beatles will never be successful.<sup>9</sup> The iPhone will fail.<sup>10</sup>

With the benefit of hindsight we like to think how obvious it was that these future predictions were wrong. Instinctively feeling that we would not have made such an obvious error of judgement. However, we are making that observation while looking backwards at the certain past. If we had been asked to make the same observation back then, looking forward into an uncertain future, our intuition is just as likely to have been wrong.

Hard to admit but it is true.

At least that is what my intuition tells me.

(See how complex the world can be).

## Sensibly Make Sense

Sensemaking is the process by which we interpret and give meaning to our experiences.<sup>11</sup> This applies particularly to new and unfamiliar experiences – as in more familiar settings our minds can better make sense of the situation, by recollecting previously defined meanings.

This meaningful dynamic of new experiences creates a unique opportunity to make sense... of sensemaking.

### *Transformation in Action*

## SENSE

Developing your ability to lead in the future of work requires being able to sense and understand signals of change. While others may overlook or dismiss them, every new input is a potential opportunity to transform the future.

So take a closer look at the word ‘sensemaking’. Even more importantly, examine more closely your first reaction to the word.

Was it the first time you had encountered it or did it strike you as an everyday phrase? What did it mean to you – and where did you intuitively draw that meaning from? How confident are you that the meaning your mind ascribes to the word is accurate and complete?

Now examine your behaviour. What process did you follow to make sense of the word? Did you just skim the available information and draw your own conclusion – as so often we do, missing important clues.

Or were you naturally curious, taking the time to divert off the predictable course, by following the reference note<sup>11</sup> in this section’s

opening sentence? Was your natural instinct to go a step further, disrupting the status quo by pausing to explore beyond the expected?

Perhaps checking in a dictionary to see if the word is more commonly written as ‘sense-making’ rather than ‘sensemaking.’ Discovering as a result that although the term has been in use for almost a century, its frequency of use has exponentially grown in the past decade.<sup>12</sup>

Which of course, makes sense.

---

This exploration is not about how you approach the word ‘sensemaking’. It is about how you and others around you approach the act of sensemaking.

Developing your ability to make sense of a complex and constantly evolving world.

To better understand, what it all means.

---

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Technology advances enable us to be more certain.
- Despite these advances uncertainty will always exist.
- Navigating uncertainty by sensing requires logical and emotional intelligence.
- Our intuition is both useful and fallible.
- Sensemaking gives meaning to our experiences.

*Sensing the Future*

Jean Liu

Co-founder and President, DiDi Global

DiDi Global is the world's largest mobile transportation platform delivering over ten billion passengers a year, significantly more than other ride-hailing services such as Uber.<sup>13</sup> Founded in China in 2012 the company is now valued at over USD 38 billion with investment from strategic partners such as Apple.<sup>14</sup>

Jean Liu, Co-founder and President of DiDi, leads the organisation to sense new possibilities while also making sense of the resulting complexities. As she explains, this involves a level of understanding and humanity that extends beyond the capabilities of data-driven artificial intelligence:

“We launched more than 40 product features about safety – facial recognition, route sharing so itinerary sharing – there are 40 of them, but the challenge part is not about how committed we can be for safety. There are a lot of dilemmas that I can't ask our data scientists for an answer to. It's a social problem. For example, one dilemma we face is do we allow drivers to reject drunk passengers?”

“Drivers complained to us – hundreds of them complained to us daily, saying can we reject this drunk passenger? Do we allow it or not? We put up a nationwide consultation forum and we asked for people’s feedback. 80% of them thought we should. It was a surprise to us because our original concern was if we let that happen, then what if something bad happens to the drunk passenger? So what we do not encourage is drunk passengers to ride by themselves – they need to be accompanied by a sober friend.”<sup>15</sup>

Liu’s sensitive approach to exploring and solving complex challenges such as this demonstrates the importance of developing a broad range of sensing capabilities – from nationwide forums to riding with drivers, to even working as a driver herself. In doing so discovering new solutions at the intersection of society and technology – ultimately ensuring safer journeys for all.

PART II

# Strategy Map

*Chart Your Venture  
into the Future*

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

*To see into the*

*Unknown*

*Future*

*First*

*We must know*

*How to*

*Be*

*Present*

Strategic planning is a process not an event.

All too often leaders approach strategy as if it is something to be scheduled and completed annually.<sup>1</sup> Not fully appreciating that strategy is a plan of action to achieve major aims. With the very nature of life meaning that the conditions we are operating in are continuously evolving – impacting on the actions required and sometimes even redefining our aims.

Like any journey into the unknown, you are far more likely to reach your intended destination with a clear map. Easy to say, far more difficult to do. Unlike mapping geography which can be physically travelled to and mapped along the way, mapping the future requires travelling through time.

Which requires a different type of map making.

Strategically mapping your future can best be thought of as a weather map rather than the classic road map. A road map implies clear pathways, whereas the reality is constantly shifting conditions that require closer monitoring and course adjustments.

To navigate uncertainty with greater confidence and momentum, teams require the visionary clarity of strategic focus – like guiding lights through the haze of an ever-changing environment. Enabling us to scan the horizon to adapt to the shifting conditions ahead. Evolving our approach while remaining focused on clear goals and the ultimate destination.

STRATEGY MAP							
Known		PAST	Inspiration	PRESENT	FUTURE	Direction	Unknown
Trends	Capabilities	Insights	Innovations	Strategies	Goals	Vision	Scenarios
Social	People	Leap #1	What if we...	Focus #1	Customer	Looking ahead	Preferable
Technological	Process	Leap #2	Adapt	Focus #2	Financial	we see...	Probable
Economic	Platform	Leap #3	Combine	Focus #3	Process	Quarter	Plausible
Environmental	Performance		Substitute		Growth	Year	Possible
Political			Simplify		Sustainability	Multi-year	
Legal			Modify		Generational	Decade	
Ethical			Reverse				
	<b>MINDLEAP</b>	<b>LEVERAGED</b>	<b>EXPANSIVE</b>	<b>ACTIVE</b>	<b>PROGRESSIVE</b>		
	Futurework	Inclusive	Collaborative	Adaptive	Visionary		
	Skills	Digital	Innovative	Impactful	Strategic		
<b>Values</b>	Value #1	Value #2	Value #3				
<b>Purpose</b>	Why? We're here to... / We believe... / We're on a mission to...						

FIGURE 3: A Strategy Map provides a framework for developing a strategic plan of action to achieve your major aims

Download the full Strategy Map template at [www.futurework.tools](http://www.futurework.tools)

When you work with a Strategy Map begin with the end in mind – starting on the right by exploring future scenarios to help guide your vision ahead...

## Progress Forward

- *Scenarios* – Give structure and clarity to the unknown by defining possible to preferable scenarios, informing the capabilities and strategies required.
- *Vision* – Navigate through uncertainty with a vision beyond generic ambition, creating a compelling big picture view of the future state of your organisation.

## Actively Plan

- *Goals* – Strategy requires a plan of action designed to achieve major aims, so clearly defined and tracked goals are critical to strategic progress.
- *Strategies* – Strategic focuses need to be simply memorable to inform action, while being complexly unique to provide competitive advantage.

## Expand Possibilities

- *Innovations* – Leap forward by collaboratively reflecting on the past, reimagining the present and creating the future from diverse perspectives.
- *Insights* – Stand on the shoulders of giants to see beyond the haze of the unknown, by exploring insights from the knowledge and experiences of others.

## Leverage Resources

- *Capabilities* – Leverage existing capabilities while developing an organisation that is ready for the future of work.
- *Trends* – Adapt to strategic shifts needed by anticipating and responding to disruptive trends ahead of their impact.

## Build Certainty

- *Values* – Align priorities and cultural behaviours through collaboratively defined and lived values.
- *Purpose* – Provide stability and intrinsic motivation with an inspiring and deeply believed reason for being.

## Leap Ahead

- *Mindleap* – Solve complex challenges by shifting fixed mindsets into future-focused leaps in thinking.

Strategic plans do not exist in isolation. A successful strategy is a considered plan of action that can also adapt to the changing environment. When developing your strategy, consider the broader context that you are operating within. Mapping the wider world and your course through it.

Seeing the bigger picture.

## CHAPTER SUMMARY

- Progress forward by defining scenarios and visioning future possibilities ahead.
- Actively plan clear goals and memorably unique strategies.
- Expand possibilities with diverse innovations and visionary insights.
- Leverage resources with future ready capabilities while also anticipating trends.
- Provide certainty through values and purpose while overcoming uncertainty with leaps in thinking.

PART III

# Futurework Toolkit

*New Ways of Thinking,  
Leading and Working*

## MINDLEAPS

*Our habits shape*

*How we see the world*

*What we hear when listening*

*How we think about new possibilities*

*What we do to create change*

*Who we become*

Classically, facilitation involves helping others to reach a solution without getting too directly involved in the thinking and discussions yourself.<sup>1</sup> However, the practical reality for most leaders is that you are operating in a dual mode when facilitating meetings and working with others – facilitating by not leading, while also leading without constraining diversity of thought.

It is a complex and difficult balance. Made all the more challenging when facilitating hybrid meetings across different geographical locations.<sup>2</sup> Requiring a hybrid style of leadership across a hybrid environment – in other words exponentially hybrid.

Complex new environments require new approaches.

New ways of thinking, leading and working.

At the foundation of this shift is what we call a Mindleap.

Set means to be fixed in place. So rather than requiring a new mindset, in times of change what we all need is a Mindleap.

Giving each of us the ability to respond and adapt in changing environments. Rapidly learning and applying new approaches to build powerful new habits. Having a far greater impact than any one person could alone, by collaboratively transforming the way we all work together.

Achieving greater results.

Progressing further.

Leaping forward.

INCLUSIVE

#3

## Amplify Hidden Voices

*Loud noises*

*Are easy to hear*

*Just as the obvious*

*Is plain to see*

*The future*

*Is found in the whispers*

*Listen carefully*

*Before the volume becomes*

*Deafening*

The answer is obvious.

When the answer seems obvious to you, it can be a signal that you have indeed arrived at the best solution. It can also signal that you are simply blind to greater possibilities.

New possibilities that exist beyond the boundaries of your personal perspective and lived experiences. Which you have no way of knowing, without exploring further.

This is an important dynamic in life. The tension between the status quo and innovation. Often the phrase status quo is used to imply an existing state of affairs that has stagnated, risking becoming irrelevant. Needing to be challenged and improved. However our lives depend on the majority of our decisions being made following predetermined patterns – following along with the status quo.

From putting the milk back in the fridge to stopping for red lights, we go along with the status quo for very sound reasons. Yet our ability to mindlessly follow along with the rules also diminishes our ability to mindfully question existing conventions.

This dynamic also exists in meetings and discussions, where groups fall into predictable patterns of behaviour. With the leaders and other dominant personalities doing most of the talking, while quieter more introverted members of the group do more of the listening.

Overlooking the fact that given their ability to listen and reflect more deeply, often less vocal people have greater insight that other more extroverted personalities miss.

Making conventional meeting dynamics an important example of a status quo that should be challenged.

It is critical to also keep top of mind that more vocal contributors frequently are not reflective of the diversity of opinions across the group. So when facilitating meetings apply a range of techniques to amplify diverse ideas from across the group. Ask questions of the wider team to help shift the imbalance.

Remember that inevitably our personal experiences also create unconscious bias. Otherwise regardless of what people share with us, the risk is we might not hear it.

So listen carefully. To what you cannot hear.

---

## INCLUSIVE HABIT

*Reflection:* In meetings and conversations how dominant is your voice? Regardless of your position or role in the group, what proportion of the available time are you talking for? Is it more or less than an equal share? How much is the difference? Assess honestly, looking at yourself from the perspective of others in the group. Now think about the others in the group. Who does not have the opportunity to contribute as much and how might you rebalance this?

*Conversation:* Have a group conversation taking extra care to create an environment that does not require introverts to become extroverts to be heard. In an in person environment use tools such as sticky notes to visually encourage everyone to contribute. While keeping in mind it is not about the notes, it is about the conversation created – so encourage everyone to speak to their notes.

*Action:* In an online environment use the meeting chat and other collaboration apps to frame questions, giving everyone space to respond. Keep in mind people might miss the verbal question, so also type focusing prompts in the chat. When working across hybrid environments, enable those in the room to also contribute to the chat on mobile devices. Use a mix of small breakout groups and times with cameras off to give more introverted members of the team time and space to form their thoughts.

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